

NEWS MEDIA CONTACT:
Jeff Sherwood, 202/586-5806

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, June 28, 2005

U.S. Statements on International Fusion Reactor (ITER) Siting Decision

WASHINGTON, DC – Today in Moscow, Russia, the ministers representing the six ITER parties, including Dr. Raymond L. Orbach, Director of the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Science, announced the ITER international fusion reactor will be located at the EU site in Cadarache, France. Below are statements by U.S. government officials following the signing of the agreement at the ministerial meeting. The text of the announcement by the six parties is available at www.iter.org

- Statement by U.S. Secretary of Energy Samuel W. Bodman:

"Plentiful, reliable energy is critical to continued worldwide economic development. Fusion technologies have the potential to transform how energy is produced and provide significant amounts of safe, environmentally-friendly power in the future. The ITER project will make this vision a reality."

- Statement by DOE Office of Science Director Raymond L. Orbach, who represented the United States at the Ministerial Meeting:

"The United States supports the decision of the parties to the ITER negotiations to conduct the international fusion reaction experiment at Cadarache, France, and the U.S. looks forward to getting ITER construction there underway as soon as practical.

"It boded well for ITER that there were two serviceable sites and six parties committed to this important fusion project. Now that the partners have agreed on a site, the ITER negotiations must also resolve an agreed-upon financial and procurement arrangement, together with a satisfactory management and oversight arrangement.

"In these negotiations, the U.S. will continue to strive for a robust management structure and an oversight program based on the principles of equity, accountability and transparency to ensure both the success of the project and the best use of taxpayer dollars.

"Fulfilling the promise of ITER will require continued international collaboration and cooperation such as that demonstrated by the six parties to the ITER talks in arriving at today's decision."

NOTE: Dr. Orbach will be available to speak with reporters by phone at 12 p.m. Eastern today. Reporters should call the DOE press office at 202/586-5806 for details about the conference call.

(MORE)

The text of Dr. Orbach's prepared remarks at the Ministerial Meeting is available at:
www.sc.doe.gov

Background:

President Bush announced on January 30, 2003, that the U.S. was joining the negotiations for the construction and operation of a major international magnetic fusion project. Known as ITER, the project's mission is to demonstrate the scientific and technological feasibility of fusion energy.

"The results of ITER," President Bush said, "will advance the effort to produce clean, safe, renewable, and commercially-available fusion energy by the middle of this century. Commercialization of fusion has the potential to dramatically improve America's energy security while significantly reducing air pollution and emissions of greenhouse gases."

The Bush administration considers fusion a key element in U.S. long-term energy plans. ITER will allow scientists to explore the physics of a burning plasma at energy densities close to that of a commercial power plant, the critical next step in producing and delivering commercially available electricity from fusion to the grid.

Another key advantage of fusion energy over current methods of electricity generation is that it can produce hydrogen with no carbon emissions. Thus ITER may contribute to a hydrogen-based economy of the future.

The Department of Energy has led the U.S. delegation to the ITER talks. China, the European Union, Japan, the Russian Federation, and South Korea also are participating in the ITER negotiations.

There have been two competing sites to host the \$5 billion test bed for harnessing nuclear fusion to generate electricity. In November 2003, the European Union selected Cadarache, France, as its candidate site; Japan's contender was Rokkasho. The U.S. has supported the Japanese site on technical grounds.

In July 2004, the U.S. Department of Energy announced after a national competition that the U.S. ITER Project Office will be located at Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory, located on Princeton University's James Forrestal Campus in Plainsboro, New Jersey. The U.S. ITER Project Office is responsible for project management of U.S. activities to support construction of the international research facility.

-DOE-

R-05-145